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The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chairman EX PARTE OR LATE FILED
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M St. NW, Room 814
Washington, D.C. 20054

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MAR 17 1997

Dear Chairman Hundt

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I write in support of meaningful discounts on telecommunications services for schools and libraries so that every school child and life - long learner can have access to the world of information technology. The Telecommunication Act, through its Universal Service Fund provisions, mandates the development of special discount rates for all schools and libraries so that they can service at affordable prices.

There is no doubt that advanced telecommunications services are important to improving learning, sparking the imagination and leveling the playing field for all of our nation's people. Affordable access to technology in all classrooms and libraries will assure that our children and life - long learners can connect with the technology they would need to compete in today's and tomorrow's workforce. Advanced telecommunications services in the classroom will also create informed and skilled consumers of new technology well into the 21st century.

Last November, the Federal - State Joint Board on Universal Services sent to the Federal Communications Commission a set of recommendations for implementing the Universal Service Fund provisions related to schools and libraries. These recommendations would give our learning institutions significant discounts on all services that are commercially available, with deeper discounts for those schools and libraries least able to pay and more expensive to service. All schools would get discounts on connections to classrooms and Internet connectivity, both of which are essential to providing the most advanced learning opportunities to the greatest number of students.

We urge your support for the Joint Boards recommendations. Taken as a whole, they will provide affordable discounts for a full range of services, and give schools and libraries flexibility in choosing the services needed to meet each community's diverse needs. Most importantly, these provisions, if adopted by the FCC, will make advanced technology for learning available to all Americans.

Sincerely,

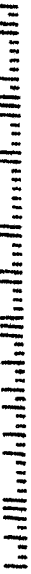
James F. Cunningham

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